

AA example, circuit boards that are inserted into slots of a system chassis. Of course, in other embodiments the system may contain more or less modules. Each of modules 110, 120, 130, and 140 may be a power supply, fan tray, CPU Board, or any other type of component. The controllers in system 100 may each be coupled through an input/output port to a system management bus 150, which may be any type of bus that carries management information. Example of system management bus 150 are an Inter-IC bus (I²C) that conforms to the I²C Bus Specification developed by Philips Semiconductor Corporation, a System Management Bus (SMBus) which conforms to the SMBus Specification (Ver. 2.0, Aug. 2000) of the SBS Implementers Forum, or an Intelligent Platform Management Bus (IPMB) which conforms to the Intelligent Platform Management Bus Communications Protocol Specification (Intel Corp. et al., v1.0, November 15, 1999). The system management bus may be configured in any type of topology such as a single bus, star, dual bus, or a hybrid topology. If a dual bus topology is used, the system management controller may have a second input/output port to send a duplicate copy of system management messages to the other system management controllers. A system management controller may communicate with other system components using various types of message formats such as that defined in the Intelligent Platform Management Interface Specification (Intel Corp. et al., v1.5, rev. 1, Feb. 21, 2001) (herein IPMI).

Please amend the paragraph on 7 that begins with line 10 to read as follows:

Management controllers, such as those shown in system 200, may be capable of operating in one, some, or all of BMC mode, standby-BMC mode, or SMC mode. For example, BMC 215 may also be capable of operating as a standby-BMC or an SMC, standby-BMC 225 may also be capable or operating as a BMC or an SMC, and SMC 235 may only be capable or operating as an SMC. In other embodiments, for example, SMC 235 may be capable of operating as BMC, and/or BMC 215 may not be capable or operating as an SMC.

Please amend the paragraph on 12 that begins with line 3 to read as follows:

A3
Thus, according to an embodiment of the invention, a response that is sent back to the sender of the controller mode request may be based at least in part on the current state of the receiver. The response may be based at least in part on the controller mode capabilities of the receiver and may be based at least in part on a user-configured mode preference. The method shown in FIG. 3 and in FIG. 4 may be performed as part of a controller initiation process. Although the operations of the method shown in FIG. 3 and in FIG. 4 are discussed in the order shown, in other embodiments some of the operations may be performed in different orders. For example, a system management controller may send a controller mode request, and respond to one or more requests that it received, at substantially the same time.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claim 1 to read as follows:

A4
1. (Once Amended) A system comprising a first system management controller to negotiate with other system management controllers to determine the first system management controller's initial operational mode.